

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 5-16 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Applicant teaches a natural speech dialogue system comprising: a natural language understanding engine; a speech recognition engine operable to recognize words in a dialogue and to transmit the recognized words to the natural language understanding engine for further processing; a knowledge support module, the knowledge support module comprising a knowledge representation database and a knowledge base interface; a context information module, the context information module comprising a context information data structure, a context information interface, and at least one dialogue act rule set, wherein the context information data structure is an attribute-value data structure operable to store information of a conversation; and a flexible dialogue management module operable to control a flow of information between the knowledge base interface, the context information interface, the speech recognition engine, and the natural language understanding engine, wherein the flexible dialogue management module is operable to apply a set of general dialogue act rules to a conversation in connection with context information from the context information module, and to generate a response to the conversation using the knowledge support module. The cited prior art alone or in combination fails to fairly teach or suggest the claimed combination of features.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vijay B. Chawan whose telephone number is (571) 272-7601. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richemond Dorvil can be reached on (571) 272-7602. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Vijay B. Chawan/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2626

vbc

4/17/08